

Imperial Tobacco Group plc



With multiple sites and a diverse community of users, Imperial Tobacco uses flexible and highly responsive break/fix maintenance and support services from BT Engage IT.

A FTSE 100 Company, Imperial Tobacco is a leading international group with a presence in over 160 countries, operating 51 manufacturing sites and employing 38,000 people. “We’re a decentralised operation in terms of IS, with standards that apply across all sites,” says Katherine Brough, Global IS Procurement Manager. “Our IS community and the various businesses need to follow a number of policies and guidelines, along with a compliance process ensuring standards are adhered to. Governance is a major part of what Group Information Systems

“BT Engage IT has been exceptionally flexible, in contractual terms, and is very good at delivering the services we require – but what’s outside the cost, and the service delivered, is the knowledge we are important to BT Engage IT.”
Katherine Brough, Global IS Procurement Manager

deliver.” Ensuring consistent practices is important given the vast size and spread of Imperial Tobacco’s operations. In terms of good governance and mitigating enterprise risk, another essential component is highly responsive nationwide support should a hardware failure occur. “End users want to come to work, use their systems and get the information they need to do the job. Group Information Systems exists to support that,” Brough says. “Our supplier relationship with BT Engage IT works; what more could you want?”

Solution

Since 2002, BT Engage IT has provided hardware break/fix cover for 200-plus HP ProLiant servers in Imperial Tobacco’s UK data centres; the contract was successfully renewed and updated in 2011. “We have sites in Bristol, Nottingham, Farnham Royal near Slough, and a vending arm in Wolverhampton, all supported by BT Engage IT,” says Brough. At the end of 2012, the Bristol and Farnham Royal offices are combining in a single location. Support is underpinned by rigorous service level agreements (SLAs) with a range of fix windows, depending on the importance of the equipment involved. For example, the contract includes: business-critical servers on a 4 Hour Fix, development servers on 8 or 16 Hour Fixes, Cisco switches on 4 to 16 Hour Fixes, 3Com switches are also covered, as well as Printers on an 8 Hour Fix.

If incidents occur, technical specialists at each site call BT Engage IT’s Service Desk. Brough says, “We also purchase server hardware through BT Engage IT, as it’s a HP nominated supplier and Gold Partner. If we want extended warranty or continual service, BT Engage IT is already fully aware of the equipment, when we bought it, and usually what is required. So it’s a simple flow, a continuation of service – one that enables our technical staff to manage warranty and ongoing requirements as life can quickly get complicated – and there’s usually a cost to that complication.”

Why BT Engage IT?

Brough continues, “Our relationship with BT Engage IT has developed over time – and has been of great benefit to Imperial Tobacco. Most recently, we’ve been able to tailor our contract to take into account business changes planned for December 2012, combining three sites.” This involved extensive reworking, additions and changes to contractual arrangements with, Brough says, BT Engage IT showing exceptional flexibility. “Both sides really focused on what we wanted to achieve. The high degree of flexibility we were granted by BT Engage IT was great. We went in with one idea and came out with a better solution. So it really worked well. We wanted a continuation of supply, to

limit the contract so we weren't tied-in to three or four years when we knew we'd have to break it – and we wanted to work with BT Engage IT to achieve that continued level of service.” The figures show, on average, 90% of calls responded to, fixes delivered and calls cleared within SLAs.

“This was a win all round: we achieved a cost saving, we removed some equipment without penalties and we secured our contractual commitment. Other organisations out there could doubtless provide a similar service, but what's outside the cost and the service is the knowledge that we are important to BT Engage IT.” Group Information Systems was so impressed it named BT Engage IT Supplier of the Month for the UK: “And we don't award that every month, only if there's a worthy recipient.” In terms of overall service, Brough knows the support is good: “Our reporting system gives absolute clarity around, for example, calls logged and their resolution, exceptions if things fall outside the SLAs, and if they've been pulled back in, as such can't be classed as a penalty – through our own choosing, we might have declined delivery, and so on. There are also chargeables outside the agreement. The insights provided by those reports are fundamental to our supplier relationship with BT Engage IT, because we can see what's working, and areas for improvement.” In fact, a Service Improvement Plan was initiated a few years ago, administered and monitored by BT Engage IT, to drive higher service levels. “Reports, regular meetings and plans are so important – and that improvement plan was a real success.”

“End users want to come into work, use their systems and get the information they need to do the job. Group Information Systems are here to support that, enabling our internal customers and meeting their needs. Our relationship with BT Engage IT has been of great benefit: they have been exceptionally flexible, in terms of contractual changes, and very good at delivering the services we require.”

**Katherine Brough, Global IS
Procurement Manager**

BT Engage IT provides businesses with access to one of the most comprehensive IT services portfolios in the market providing compelling and differentiated IT solutions. Additionally, as we are part of the BT Group, we are able to offer a truly integrated suite of services to assist in the advice, design, deployment and support of IT requirements to meet clients' business needs.

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